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# 1197

# FOOD IN A NATIONAL EMERGENCY

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*A guide to understanding Standby Defense Food Order No. 2 for food processors, wholesalers, chain store distribution centers, and operators of commercial food storage facilities in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.*

The Nation must be prepared for prompt, effective action in case of a national emergency. Advance knowledge by the food industry about what to do will aid survival and recovery operations.

*"National Emergency" is defined as an attack upon the United States or proclamation of a civil defense emergency by the President or by concurrent resolution by Congress because an attack is believed imminent.*

This guide provides instructions to the food industry for handling raw and processed foods in its possession and for providing for their storage, conservation, efficient processing, and orderly and equitable distribution in the early period after a national emergency. The guidelines contained in this publication are subject to change as circumstances warrant. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and State agencies will advise the food industry as changes are made.

The USDA is responsible for planning and carrying out the emergency program governing the processing and distribution of food from the farm to the local retail store. By agreement, part of these responsibilities will be shared with State governments in some States. State agencies are responsible for the emergency program relating to distribution of food to ultimate consumers at the local retail store level. These programs have been developed in consultation with other Federal agencies, State governments, and representatives of the food processing and distribution industries.

Standby Defense Food Order No. 2 and two suborders, incorporating the main program provisions, will be issued in a national emergency and will become the "Order Administrator's" principal instrument for the control of the processing and distribution of foods for civilian and military consumption. The Order Administrator is the Secretary of Agriculture, or the chairman of the USDA State Emergency Board. In the preemergency period—prior to a determination that a national emergency exists—the chairman is the State Executive Director of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS).

The food industry, especially those involved in the processing, storage, and distribution of food, should become familiar with the contents of this guide and follow its instructions in case of national emergency. *This guide should be reviewed with key personnel and kept with important papers.*



## WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE:

The Operator of a Chain Store Food Distribution Center  
The Operator of a Commercial Food Storage Facility  
A Food Processor  
A Food Wholesaler

Report the operating capability of your facility within 5 days after civil defense authorities permit access to it. Make the report directly to the Order Administrator in care of the USDA County Emergency Board in the county in which the facility is located.

*During the preemergency period, the chairman of the County Emergency Board will be located in the county ASCS office. During the postemergency period (following a determination that a national emergency exists), the board will operate from the same location as other key county offices and officials.*

Make every practicable effort to protect all food stocks that are within the confines of your facility.

Do not distribute food outside of normal trade channels nor directly to ultimate consumers, except when authorized by the Order Administrator to make deliveries to specified locations.

*Establish normal business relationships with new customers regarding payment*

*for goods and services, and continue these relationships with previous customers. Notify the USDA County Emergency Board if financial arrangements with new customers cannot be agreed upon.*

*Base distribution of food to consumer outlets on their written confirmation of the expected number of consumers to be served. Do not exceed the USDA National Emergency Maximum Food Allowance, or the local government ration level.*

*Fluid milk and fresh fruits and vegetables, except potatoes, are exempt from distribution restrictions.*

Do not accumulate inventories of fresh or processed foods in excess of reasonable need for civilian distribution.

Meet all military requirements.

*Hold sufficient quantities of food to satisfy undelivered portions of existing military contracts.*

*Do not distribute for civilian use any food owned by the military until released by the military.*

## USDA EMERGENCY ORGANIZATION

*The boards and staffs described below are made up of representatives of USDA agencies which, in addition to their regular day-to-day program assignments, have been selected to assist in carrying out USDA defense responsibilities.*

**USDA COUNTY EMERGENCY BOARDS (CEB's)** provide coverage for every county and would act as the initial contact point for members of the food industry in a national emergency or for guidance during preemergency. In most cases, the chairman is the County Executive Director of the ASCS.

**USDA STATE EMERGENCY BOARDS (SEB's)** have been set up in each State and Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands. The chairman is the ASCS State Executive Director.

**USDA REGIONAL EMERGENCY STAFFS** have been designated in each of the 10 Federal regions with headquarters in Boston, MA; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Atlanta, GA; Chicago IL; Dallas, TX; Kansas City, KS; Denver, CO; San Francisco, CA; and Seattle, WA.



## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

### CHAIN DISTRIBUTION CENTERS

Assume the role of a wholesaler and distribute food stocks as equitably and continuously as possible to your chain's consumer outlets and to other consumer outlets who request food supplies even though they may not be part of the chain's operation.

*Other consumer outlets may include independently owned chain stores, chain and independent food service operations, or other away-from-home eating places including emergency feeding centers designated by State and local governments.*

*Establish a normal wholesaler-retailer business relationship with new customers regarding payment for goods and services rendered.*

**Deliver food to consumer outlets at any interval of time which promotes orderly and efficient distribution.**

*Cases, boxes, bags, or other normal packaging units need not be broken to meet established maximum distribution rates.*

### FOOD WHOLESALERS

Distribute food stocks as equitably and continuously as possible to previous customers and to other established consumer outlets who request food supplies, even though they may not have been previous customers.

*Other consumer outlets may include chain stores, chain and independent food service operations, or other away-from-home eating places including emergency feeding centers designated by State and local governments.*

**Deliver food to consumer outlets at any interval of time which promotes orderly and efficient distribution.**

*Cases, boxes, bags, or other normal packaging units need not be broken to meet established maximum distribution rates.*

**If you have done business with the military during the immediate preceding 12 months, set aside a portion of your current inventory equal to the percent of your total business with the military.**

### FOOD PROCESSORS

**Continue your normal processing operation to the extent practicable.**

*Use raw foods and ingredients to provide the optimum output of end products.*

*Do not use sugar or other natural sweeteners as an ingredient in excess of 50 percent of recent or seasonal use.*

*Adjust formulas to obtain optimum product output.*

*Take all reasonable precautions to assure that the food processed or the end products obtained are fit for human consumption.*

**Distribute products on hand or subsequently processed through established trade channels as equitably and continuously as possible.**

*Make distribution to wholesalers and chain store distribution centers requesting food even though they may not have been a prior customer. Distribution directly to consumer outlets (local retail stores and food service establishments) is permitted if operators of outlets were previous customers or it is necessary to bypass or omit steps.*

*Set aside a portion of your current inventory equal to the percent of your total business with the military if you have done business with the military during the immediate preceding 12 months.*

*Hold food already processed for a military contract, but undelivered, for disposition by the military.*

# PLAN TO SURVIVE

Survival of food facilities will be essential to providing a supply of food adequate to meet the needs of our country in a national emergency. Each element in the food industry chain is a key link in providing this food. Plan now for survival of your business.

**Prepare general emergency plans.**

*Include clear instructions on shutdown procedures and emergency actions.*

*Establish emergency command patterns. Assign and train a principal and alternate person for each post.*

*Assign specific emergency duties to each employee and provide training in those duties.*

*To assure success in case of need, thoroughly test your emergency plan and schedule regular practice of the plan.*

**Use protective construction techniques on new construction.**

*Provide fallout protection for all personnel.*

*Where practical, use underground or partly underground construction.*

*Use windowless construction to reduce vulnerability to fire.*

*Reduce susceptibility to blast damage by channeling utilities through a reinforced concrete floor.*

**Upgrade the existing plant and reduce physical vulnerability through a normal program of plant improvement.**

*Modify buildings where practicable.*

*Improve grounding and shielding of electrical panels and controls.*

*Improve protection of complex machinery and equipment against damage.*

*Improve fallout shelter capability of plant.*

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